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THE TALE OF PWYLL*.

Pwyll, Prince of Dyved, was lord of the seven provinces of Dyved. Once upon a time he was at Arberth, one of his chief palaces, when he formed the resolution to go out a-hunting; and the part of his territory, on which he intended to sport, was the valley of Cuch. Accordingly, he set out the same night from Arberth, and arrived at the head of the grove of Diarwya, where he remained for that night. The next morning, at break of day, he rose, and went to the valley of Cuch to turn out his dogs beneath the wood. He sounded his horn, and began to enter upon the chase, following his dogs and separating from his companions. And, as he was listening to the cry of his pack, he could distinctly hear the cry of another pack, different from that of his own, and which was coming in an opposite direction. He could also discern an opening in the wood towards a level plain; and, as his pack was entering the skirt of the opening, he perceived a stag before the other pack, and about the middle of the glade the pack in the rear coming up and throwing the stag on the ground. Upon this he fixed his attention on the colour of the pack without recollecting to look at the stag; and of all the hounds in the world, he had ever seen, he never saw any like them in colour. Their colour was a shining clear white, with red ears: and the whiteness of the dogs and the redness of their ears were equally conspicuous.

After this he came up to the dogs, and, driving the pack away, which had killed the stag, he enticed his own pack on. And, as he was doing this, he observed a knight coming after the pack; on a large dapple grey horse, with a bugle horn round his neck and a hunting dress of dark brown woollen cloth. The knight, upon this, came up to him, and addressed him in this manner. Ha, prince, said he, I know not who thou art, and will not, therefore, bid thee welcome. What, then, replied the other, thou art, perhaps, of a rank, to which I might not aspire. Truly, rejoined he, it is not the privilege of my rank, that deters me from addressing thee. Then, prince, said Pwyll, what is the

* Pwyll means, in Welsh, prudence. The name occurs as the hero of two or three other tales, and is, occasionally, to be found in the Welsh pedigrees, particularly in Pembrokeshire. He is also recorded as the son of Meirig, king of Dyved or Dimetia, during the former part of the sixth century: his life, as far as we know any thing of it, is, therefore, a mixture of fable and history.

cause? Between God and me, replied the other, thy own ignorance and thy own impoliteness. What impoliteness, prince, resumed Pwyll, hast thou seen in me? I have never witnessed a greater want of politeness in any one, answered the other, than to send away the hounds, that had killed the stag, and set thy own pack on him. That, said he, was a want of politeness; and, though I may not take my revenge on thee, between God and me, said he, I will cause thee to be disgraced more than the value of a hundred stags. Ah, prince, replied Pwyll, if I have done thee an injury, I will purchase thy friendship. In what manner, said the other, wilt thou purchase it? According to thy rank, answered Pwyll, but I know not who thou art. I am, rejoined the other, a king wearing a crown in the country, from which I come. My lord, said Pwyll, I salute thee, then: and what country dost thou come from? From Annwn*, said the other; I am the Silver-tongued King† of Annwn. My lord, said Pwyll, in what way shall I obtain thy friendship?

This is the way thou mayst obtain it, said the other; there is a person, whose dominion is opposite mine, that makes war continually on me, and this is Summershire‡, a king of Annwn. By freeing me from his attacks, which thou canst easily do, thou shalt obtain my friendship. Then will I do with pleasure what thou desirest, answered Pwyll; only inform me, how I may accomplish my purpose. I will, replied the other; this, then, is the way: I will form a strong alliance with thee;—and thus I will

* Mr. Davies, in his "Celtic Researches," p. 175, considers *Annwn* to "imply, figuratively, the condition of the dead or the infernal regions, which comprehended the *Elysium* and the *Tartarus* of antiquity." And, in support of this opinion, he quotes the proverb, "*Nid eir i annwn ond unwaith*"—There will be but one journey to hell,—and, likewise, the common expressions, *Cwn Annwn*, hell-hounds, and *Plant Annwn*, children of the deep, certain wandering spirits. Mr. Owen Pughe, on the other hand, gives it as his opinion, in the *Cambrian Biography* (p. 289), that the words, as used in this tale, refer to "some part of the torrid zone, of which the Britons had preserved some faint tradition from an early period;" and he farther considers it to be "the place, to which Gavran and his men went in the beginning of the sixth century," as recorded in the *Triads*.—See *CAMBRO-BRITON*, vol. i. p. 124. *Annwn* means, literally, a bottomless gulf, and Dr. Davies, in his *Dictionary*, explains it also to mean the *Antipodes*. The Irish are said to have, anciently, called their country by the name of *Annun*, or *Annan*.

† The name, here translated "Silver-tongued King," is in the original *Arawn*.

‡ The original word is *Havgan*, of which Summershire is a literal translation.

do it. I will place thee in my stead in Annwn, and thou shalt bear my form and likeness, so that neither page of the chamber, nor officer, nor any other attendant shall know but thou art I. And this, said he, shall continue until the end of the year from to-morrow; as we shall then meet again in this place. So, said Pwyll, since I am to be there until the expiration of the year, by what mark shall I know the person, of whom thou speakest? A year from this night, replied the other, there is an appointment between him and me on the course; and be thou there in my person. The first blow thou givest him he shall not outlive; and, if he ask thee for another, give it not, how much soever he may entreat it; for, were I to give him a second blow, he would contend with me as well as ever the following morning. So, said Pwyll, what shall I do as to my own country? I will cause, said the king with the silver tongue, that no one in thy dominion, man or woman, shall know but that I am thou; and I will take thy place. Joyfully, then, replied Pwyll, will I proceed. Without obstruction, rejoined the other, shall be thy journey: nothing shall oppose thee until thy arrival in my country, and I will forward thee on thy way.

He, accordingly, accompanied Pwyll till he saw the court and inhabited region around it. This, said he, is the court and the country to be in thy possession; enter the palace, there is no one in it, that will suspect thee; and, according as thou shalt see the service of the court, thou wilt become acquainted with its customs. Pwyll then approached the palace, and in it he could perceive dormitories, and saloons, and chambers, all in the fairest order, that had ever been seen: and he repaired to the saloon to undress. There came boys and young men to assist him; and all, according to their duty, made their obeisance to him. Two knights came also to take off his hunting dress: and the saloon was put in order. He, afterwards, saw a family with attendants: the most splendid and most decorous retinue approaching, that had ever been witnessed, and with them the queen, the fairest woman possible, clothed in a golden dress of shining silk. Upon this they all went to wash themselves, and repaired to the tables, where they sat down in the following order:—the queen was on one side of him, and his lord in waiting upon the other. And he began to converse with the queen; and he found her the most unembarrassed and most lady-like both in discourse and behaviour of any woman he had ever known. They then partook of the

repast, and enjoyed songs and festivity: and of all the courts Pwyll had ever seen this was most bountifully supplied with viands and liquors, and with vessels of gold and other princely ornaments.

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The year passed away in hunting, songs, festivity, games, and friendly conversation until the night fixed for the combat. Everyone, through the whole kingdom, recollected the appointment for that night. And Pwyll came to the place assigned, accompanied by the select men of his dominions; and, when he had arrived, a knight rose and spoke thus:—Good people, he exclaimed, listen attentively to the cause of these two kings, between whom this meeting takes place. The cause is between them both individually, each having a claim of territory on the other. You may all, therefore, remain unconcerned, and leave the decision to themselves.—Upon this the two kings approached one another in the middle of the course and encountered: and upon the first onset he, that was a substitute for the silver-tongued king, struck the middle of Summershine's shield, so as to split it in two, and broke through the armour, thereby bringing Summershine off his horse to the ground, save his arm and spear, and having received a mortal wound. Ah, prince, said Summershine, why didst thou seek my death? I urged no claim upon thee: nor do I know of any cause, why thou shouldst slay me. But, for God's sake, said he, since thou hast begun, complete thy task. No, prince, replied the other, there may now be a possibility of repentance for what I have done: let who will kill thee, I will not. My good and faithful people, said Summershine, bear me hence: my death is decreed,—no longer have I the means of supporting you.—You too, my good people, said the substitute for the king with the silver tongue, take your reward*; and know, who ought hereafter to be my subjects. Our liege, exclaimed the people, we ought all to be so; for thou art now the sole king over Annwn. Well, said he, it is right to receive him, that comes submissively; but whosoever comes not humbly must be compelled by force of arms.

Upon this, Pwyll began to receive the homage of the people, and to subdue the country: and by the following day, at noon,

* The word in the original, here rendered by "reward," is *cyfarws*, which, Llwyd says, denotes properly a favour bestowed on some public or solemn occasion; and it seems to be above used in that sense. In the Laws of Hywel it has the meaning of "yearly wages," and is translated *merces* by Wotton.

both kingdoms were in his possession. And, thereupon, he departed according to his agreement, and came to the valley of Cuch. When he arrived there, the silver-tongued king was ready to receive him: and much joy did each feel on the occasion. Well, said the king with the silver tongue, God reward thee; I have experienced thy friendship. Yes, replied Pwyll, when thou returnest to thy dominions, thou wilt see what I have done for thy sake. For what thou hast done for me, rejoined the other, may God reward thee!

Thereupon, the king with the silver tongue restored to Pwyll, prince of Dyved, his form and likeness, and also resumed his own; he then set off towards his palace in Annwn, and enjoyed great delight in revisiting his people and family; for he thought the time long since he had seen them. They, on the contrary, had not known of his absence, and were not more surprised at his return now than formerly.

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Pwyll, prince of Dyved, came also to his dominion and country, and entered into inquiries of the good people of his realm, respecting his government of them during that year compared with former times. Never, liege, they said, was thy wisdom so conspicuous, never hast thou shewn thyself so amiable a youth, at no time hast thou been so liberal in the diffusion of thy riches; thy government has never been better than during this year. Between God and me, said he, if any thanks are due from you, it is to the person, that was with you; for thus the matter has been. And Pwyll then explained the whole to them. Truly, liege, they replied, we owe thanks to God, that thou hast acquired such an alliance, and that we have had such a government for that year,—a continuation of which, we hope, thou wilt not deny us. Knowingly I will not, as God is my witness, was the reply of Pwyll.

From that time forward the two kings began to strengthen the alliance between them; each sending the other horses, greyhounds, hawks, and such other presents as, they thought, would be mutually pleasing. And, in consequence of his residence that year in Annwn, and of his governing so prosperously, and uniting both kingdoms in one by a single day's exertion of courage and warlike skill, the name of Pwyll, prince of Dyved, was lost; and he was, thenceforward, styled Pwyll *Pen Annwn*, or head of the world unknown*.

* The passages in this tale, above supplied by asterisks, are omitted, as